

The Merchants of Cool provided some sick insight into the world of advertising. I had always been cynical about the methods companies use to sell their product to the consumer, especially the young consumer, but now I'm downright disgusted.

The idea of "cool hunting" makes me sick. What makes me sick is that the commercial researchers view teens as animals. The question lying in every market researcher's mind when speaking to young adults is "how can I make money out of this sap?" The researcher does not care about the direction of youth culture, whether or not it's sinking to new lows, he just seeks to understand it. The cat and mouse game of advertising responding to contemporary culture is based on profit; if kids like violent love, what moral obligation does an advertiser have to refrain from appealing to that affinity?

One part of the video enflamed my angry passion towards MTV – the scene where market researchers come to that "mook's" house and ask him questions. This scene saddened me on a few levels. Firstly, the kid IS a mook. He has already lost to advertisers – I know that because he watches MTV. It saddens me to know that kids still enjoy the mind numbing programming of MTV enough to care to emulate it. Secondly, it made me sad to see the MTV treat this kid with such disrespect. Of course the mook was oblivious to the researchers true plans, and that is exactly what the researchers strive – marketing to an ignorant crowd.

"Kid" doesn't matter anymore. One kid means nothing to researchers. It's "kids" that matters. Advertising has rendered youth culture has a perpetually renewed virgin woman, and the different companies try their best to ravage her. Employing whatever

means necessary to woo and seduce her, advertisers will break any social rules as long as they make a profit.